

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants would like to thank Examiner Padgett for the helpful and courteous discussions she had with Applicants' U.S. representative on January 10, 2006. At that time, Applicants' U.S. representative proposed amending process Claim 1 such that the melting comprises heating with an induction coil at a frequency of from 2,000 to 10,000 Hz. Applicants' U.S. representative noted that none of the cited reference teach or suggest this claim limitation. The Examiner agreed this limitation was not described in the cited references and indicated that this amendment would be further reviewed for disclosures related to this range. The following expands upon that discussion.

The presently claimed process is directed to the continuous chromium-free coating of pipe. The process involves coating a pipe with a polymer coating material then melting the polymer coating to form a pipe having a melt coating where the melt process includes heating with an induction coil at a frequency of from 2,000 to 10,000 Hz and then cooling to form a pipe having a hardened coating. In the claimed process, the pipe is not treated with chromate. The claimed heating process provides for advantages in coating pipe. The claimed induction heating frequency of from 2,000 to 10,000 Hz has the advantage of providing for a heating method which is readily controllable but nevertheless very fast. It also provides for the further advantage that the induction coil which heats the pipe as it passes through the system can be placed directly within the fluidized powder with the result that there are no heat losses. The claimed method of melting is not taught or suggested by the cited references.

The rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Qureshi (U.S. 4,771,523) is respectfully traversed.

Qureshi describes a method for making endless lengths of nylon coated metal tubing. The method requires several steps which includes melting nylon onto metal tubing. However, Qureshi does not teach or suggest the presently claimed method of melting

comprising heating with an induction coil at a frequency of from 2,000 to 10,000 Hz.

Accordingly, the claimed process would not have been anticipated or obvious over Qureshi, and therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103(a) over Qureshi.

The rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Qureshi and Facer (U.S. 3,560,239) is respectfully traversed.

Facer describes a method of coating an elongated body such as steel wire. However, like Qureshi, Facer does not teach or suggest the presently claimed method of melting comprising heating with an induction coil at a frequency of from 2,000 to 10,000 Hz. Accordingly, the presently claimed process would not have been obvious over the combination of Qureshi and Facer; and therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection over the combination of these references under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Church (U.S. 3,108,022) is respectfully traversed.

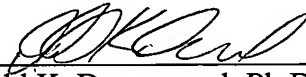
Church describes a method for coating elongated bodies such as pipes. The method involves moving a heated elongated article through a fluidized bed of coating material. However, Church does not teach or suggest the claimed method of melting as discussed above. Therefore, the claimed method would not have been anticipated or obvious over Church and Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

Finally, the rejection of Claims 1 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, has been obviated by amendment. As the Examiner will note, the claims have been amended such that they are free of the criticisms outlined on page 2 of the Office Action. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

In light of the above remarks contained herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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